

Executive Summary: Health Impact Review of HB 1716

Concerning Veterans' Mental Health Services at Institutions of Higher Education (2019 Legislative Session)

Evidence indicates that HB 1716 has the potential to increase access to and use of mental health services at institutions of higher education for student, faculty, and staff Veterans, as well as their spouses and dependents, which in turn has the potential to improve mental health outcomes and decrease mental health disparities.

BILL INFORMATION

Sponsors: Volz, Reeves, Graham, Kilduff, Steele, Shea, Schmick, McCaslin, MacEwen, Griffey, Stanford, Van Werven, Young, Orwall, Walsh, Sells, Slatter, Peterson, Leavitt, Riccelli, Smith

Summary of Bill:

- Requires all state universities, regional universities, and the state college to hire at least one full-time mental health counselor who has experience and training related to working with active members of the military or military Veterans.
- Requires the mental health counselor to prioritize work with student, faculty, and staff Veterans, as well as their spouses and dependents.
- Requires the mental health counselor to be accessible through, but not necessarily located in, each institutions' veteran resource center.

HEALTH IMPACT REVIEW

Summary of Findings:

This Health Impact Review found the following evidence regarding the provisions in HB 1716:

- **A fair amount of evidence** that if state universities, regional universities, and the state college employ at least one full-time mental health counselor with experience working with active members of the military or military Veterans that this would increase access to and use of mental health services for student, faculty, and staff Veterans, as well as their spouses and dependents.
- **Very strong evidence** that increased access to and use of mental health services at institutions of higher education would likely improve mental health outcomes for student, faculty, and staff Veterans, as well as their spouses and dependents.
- **Very strong evidence** that improved mental health outcomes for student, faculty, and staff Veterans as well as their spouses and dependents would likely decrease health disparities.

FULL REVIEW

For review methods, logic model, strength-of-evidence analyses, and citations of empirical evidence refer to the full Health Impact Review at

<https://sboh.wa.gov/Portals/7/Doc/HealthImpactReviews/HIR-2019-09-HB1716.pdf>

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